



Steve Troxler
Commissioner

**North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services**
Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Patricia K. Harris
Director

THE NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL WATER RESOURCES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

AgWRAP Review Committee

Friday, November 30, 2012: 9:00am-12:00pm
Archdale Building in Raleigh, 5th floor conference room

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Daphne Cartner, Tom Ellis, Ed Emory, Dewitt Hardee, Julie Henshaw, Cyndi Karoly, Natalie Woolard

- I. Welcome and introductions
- II. Minutes from September 5, 2012 meeting - Approved by consensus
- III. PY2013 State Pond Application Cycle: \$450,000
 - \$425,000 from PY2013 appropriation + \$25,000 from unencumbered PY2012 pond contracts
 - The application period for new pond applications closed on November 16, 2012. 28 applications from 15 districts were received:
 - 11 from the Coastal Plain
 - 4 from the Mountains
 - 13 from the Piedmont
 - These applications represent the following agricultural sectors
 - 10 from field crops operations
 - 10 from fruit and vegetable producers
 - 2 from green industry operations
 - And 6 from livestock and poultry (including forages and drinking water)
- IV. Category determination:
 - a. Truffles – green industry category, as they are water from the pond will be used to irrigate trees that are inoculated with truffles.
- V. Point values for ranking purposes
Review approved methodologies
 - A. Discuss how to weight the water supply watershed question
 - To rank this question only proposed ponds that are located in a water supply watershed would be eligible AND
 - They have to be irrigating already to get points for this question

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Archdale Building
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- B. Discuss point values for other water quantity BMPs suggested by applicants:
- The existing pond is located downslope from existing nursery and has a catch basin to collect overland flow of water. The catch basin provides pre-treatment before entering back into the existing pond. **Include with a value of 10 points.**
 - Uses a rain sensor to shut off automatic irrigation timer when it is raining. **Include with a value of 4 points.**
 - Feed/Waste Storage Structure. **No water quantity benefit unless the rooftop runoff is directed to a catch basin for storage.**
 - Stock Trail. **Water quality benefit, no water quantity benefit.**
 - This application is for the construction of a pond for an orchard. Micro-irrigation is currently used at a minimum due to lack of water supply. The new pond would allow for adequate supply to irrigate both the apple trees and blackberries. Additional trees/vines could be planted with enough supply. **Information item.**
 - Once the pond is constructed and cattle waterers installed, the pond and stream will be fenced to prevent cattle from entering the stream and a buffer will be created between pasture and stream. **Water quality benefit, no water quantity benefit.**
 - Our limited water supply has forced us to develop many conservation techniques. Each year we received thousands of cubic yards of shredded leaves from local municipalities. We apply a heavy continuous layer of this **organic mulch** around our summer crops including in the rows. We find that this technique is superior to plastic mulch in water retention, rainfall penetration, weed prevention, and soil insulation from the summer heat. We have measured a significant decrease in the amount of water required versus the use of black plastic, as much as 50%. **Already included under the acreage receiving soil amendments or mulch to add organic matter.**
 - At the end of each season we **deep plow** (12") to incorporate the decayed organic mulch which also increases the water holding capacity of our soil. **No point values.**
 - We **subsoil** annually to 24" which encourage deeper root growth and further lowers the amount of irrigation required. **No point values.**
 - Our **bed height profile** is no more than 5" which also helps to lower evaporation. **No point values.**
 - We water only to the point of keeping the soil moist but not saturated since the continuous blanket of 6" mulch does an amazing job of maintaining uniform moisture without requiring a large amount of irrigation. **Already received points under the mulch category.**
 - livestock exclusion on streams. **No point values.**
 - animal watering system – confirm whether or not they are using ball waterers.
 - grassed waterways. **No point values.**
 - field borders. **No point values.**

- VI. NC Ag Advancement Consortium proposal
A subcommittee of the AgWRAP Review Committee met with staff from Farm Bureau and NASS to draft questions. The group also reviewed the draft and the survey will be sent with the annual water use survey later this month.
- VII. Rulemaking
Asked the commission for feedback on how they would like us to proceed with rulemaking for AgWRAP funds given that they are currently non-recurring. The commission is to provide some recommendations at their January meeting.
- VIII. Set next meeting date: December 17th; 9-12 at the Agronomic Lab on Reedy Creek Road in Raleigh